



July 23, 2004

OKLAHOMA BULLETIN NO. OK300-4-19**SUBJECT: LTP – ProTracts Administration of Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP) Contracts**

Purpose: To provide guidance in the required use of ProTracts for administration of FY2003 WHIP (75F) and FY2004 WHIP contracts.

Expiration Date: September 30, 2004

IMMEDIATE ACTION REQUIRED

ProTracts Build 80 now links WHIP and CSP to the Fund Manager Software and eliminates the need for manual processing of payment applications and contract modifications. Electronic payments for WHIP, as set forth in this bulletin, will now be initiated from ProTracts (certain FY 2003 & all new 2004 contracts). A behind-the-scenes software application called Fund Manager formats obligation and payment approvals from ProTracts and feeds it directly to FFIS. State offices currently use FFIS to enter obligations and payments. They will now use FFIS to certify payments and will no longer need to enter the data manually for these contracts.

Field offices that have FY 2003 WHIP contracts that are covered under this bulletin were previously notified by email that their contracts, with the un-obligated balances, have been loaded and obligated in ProTracts. This list does not include all FY2003 contracts. There were two funding sources used to obligate contracts in FY2003, and currently ProTracts only deals with the contracts using WHIP (75F) funds.

With the update of ProTracts, all subsequent payment applications and contract administration for the WHIP (75F) fund code and new FY 2004 contracts will be conducted in ProTracts. Applied practices will be certified, payment approved (see *ProTracts Help Topics, Contracts, Book 4*, page 35) by the Designated Conservationist, and a CCC-1245 produced in ProTracts for signature by the applicant. A copy of the producer-signed CCC-1245 will be faxed directly to Financial Management at the state office at (405) 742-1129 to be maintained as documentation of the payment transaction. If the payment is for an "actual not to exceed average cost" (AA) item, a copy of an invoice or receipt must be faxed with the CCC-1245. Administration of contracts developed prior to FY 2003, and the FY2003 contracts that are not assigned to the WHIP (75F) fund code will be processed manually through the appropriate Office Assistant (OA) and forwarded to the State Office.

ProTracts WHIP Contract Administration Processes

ProTracts Help Topics, Contracts, Book 4, provides specific guidance for all contract administration activities/processes in ProTracts. As always, before attempting a new process in ProTracts, access the Training Site to obtain a level of competence and confidence before proceeding to the Production Site.

(MORE)**DIST: AO**

Following are some basic guidelines that outline current changes as a result of Build 80:

WHIP Contract Numbers - Because of the ProTracts/FFIS interface, current (FY 2004) and future WHIP applications/contracts will be automatically assigned a contract number in ProTracts that conforms to FFIS requirements. Office Assistants (OAs) will no longer assign contract numbers.

Applicant Information – The applicant information selected for attachment to the application will require a current tax identification number (tax ID number, social security number, etc.) in order to complete the vendor information and process future payments. While searching for SCIMS data for an applicant (or entering new records), authorized employees should conduct a national search (preferably using the current tax ID number) to make sure that the correct record is attached to the application. Multiple searches should be conducted before a new record is entered to avoid the possibility of entering a duplicate record.

Vendor Information – Current vendor information, or a request for waiver, must be entered in ProTracts before a WHIP contract can be obligated. This will require the individual's bank routing number and account number so that a direct deposit can be authorized. A blank 1199A, Direct Deposit Form, is available from the ProTracts Navigation Bar under "Forms" to obtain this information. Applicants may still obtain a waiver if they do not have a bank account or if they only anticipate a single payment. Vendor information may be entered from the "Applicant Information" screen or by selecting "Vendor Info" while viewing the application from the "Manage Applications" screen.

Partial Payments – ProTracts will not allow a partial payment for a single component practice. A partial payment of a component may be completed in ProTracts by first modifying the practice to add the remaining component(s) before certifying the practice and payment. The component amount/extent can be adjusted to reflect the expected partial completion amount. Multiple partial payments may be processed this way.

Changes in Components – ProTracts will not allow changes in components (i.e.: changing from sprigging to bermudagrass seed) at the time of processing the payment application. The practice will have to be modified to delete the prior component and add the new component prior to processing the payment application.

Unused Components – Any unused components (i.e.: application of lime was scheduled but soil analysis did not indicate a need for vegetative establishment) will have to be deleted by modifying the practice.

ProTracts processes will no doubt evolve with every subsequent build and will continue to improve as certain enhancements are applied. Contract administration for all NRCS programs will eventually be incorporated into ProTracts. It will take a special effort of all users to become familiar and proficient in its use.

If you have questions about this process, please forward them to the appropriate Program Liaison, Financial Management, or the Programs Staff.

/s/ Kevin D. Norton, Acting For

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State Conservationist